

## PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)

### PIASS LANGUAGE POLICY

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Huye, 17 May 2022

## **Historical background of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences**

The institution which later on became the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences was founded in 1970 by mainline protestant churches which were operating in Rwanda. The institution was then called “Ecole de Theologie de Butare: ETB” (Butare School of Theology). In 1990, it was upgraded into Faculty of Protestant Theology of Butare (FTPB) which got official accreditation in 1993 by the convention No 1552 of 09 December 1993. In the same year, the convention No 1554/09.2/01/02 acknowledged the degrees delivered by the FTPB.

In the aftermath of 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the founders of the institution, in the collaboration with the FTPB national and international partners deployed a lot of efforts to help FTPB resume its activities in such a way that specific needs of a recovering society could be met. In that perspective, a so-called Special Program was launched in 1995 and lasted till 2001: three successive intakes of students have been trained over two years and educated in contextual and practical theological training through those kinds of crash courses. The graduates of the Special program were awarded with Diploma in Protestant Theology. As of 1999, the FTPB returned to the ordinary four years program of Hon. Bachelor’s degree in Protestant Theology.

In 2010, the FTPB grew up and was supplemented by two new Faculties: Faculty of Education (FED) and the Faculty of Development Studies (FDS) within the new framework of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS). Those two new fields have been chosen based on the experiences and expertise acquired by Protestant Churches in Rwanda. The new Institution (PIASS) has been respectively accredited by the Ministerial Order no 09/11 of November 2009 licensing “Institut Protestant des Sciences

Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)” and the ministerial order n°29 of 19/07/2010 recognizing the Institute under the new name of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS).

### ***PIASS Philosophy***

PIASS holds the view that hope and science are indispensable tools for any society to survive and harness moral obligation of people to creatively improve the socio-economic environment in which they can survive and realize their potential. This can only be achieved through a well-conceptualized educational and scientific package through which everyone must rightfully experience and acquire the tools to facilitate this philosophy.

### ***PIASS Vision***

“To be a reference university, fostering knowledge development and research that is relevant for the society and inspired by Christian ethics and values.”

### ***PIASS Mission***

“To provide to Rwandan Society and Churches well trained personnel who are inquisitive, solution oriented, committed and equipped with intellectual tools that enable them to meeting specific needs of societies that are moving to a global, modern and pluralistic world.”

### ***PIASS Moto***

“Fides et Scientia”

### ***PIASS Objectives***

PIASS as Higher Learning Institution has the following objectives:

- To develop practical and applicable knowledge in social as well as economic development

- To impart a high quality teaching enabling creation of employment and that proves relevant to communities is close to reality, helpful for the society at large.
- To contribute to the positive transformation of society using short teaching and training, research, consultancy and projects and respect to ethical dimension.
- To contribute to local and national sustainable development by promoting scientific and technological research as well as research for integrated development

This policy lays down minimum requirements for language teaching in PIASS.

### **Article 1: Aims of PIASS language policy**

This policy aims to ensure that students gain the language skills they need and that languages are taught in the context of the academic disciplines and in parallel with subject study. At the same time, this policy aims to ensure that students' language proficiency level is not a barrier to their studies and to assist students who have a weak language base with a particular emphasis on English as medium of instruction in Rwanda.

### **Article 2: Objectives of PIASS language policy**

- To bring all PIASS students and employees to a high level of language proficiency in a relatively short period of time;
- To enhance learners ability to cope with their program's lecture and other academic requirements;
- To enable the learners to be more competitive in the national, regional and international labor market
- To help the surrounding community improve their language skills.

### **Article 3: Classification of the learners according to the levels of English**

## proficiency

At least one month before the beginning of each academic year (and or intake), PIASS organize a placement test to assess the level of English proficiency. Based on the test results, the learners are classified in three categories: Beginners, intermediate and advanced levels. PIASS shall award a certificate of language proficiency to all the learners according to their individual level of language proficiency.

- **Beginners:** The candidates who get below 50% in placement test. They are required to study two modules of English in intermediate (20 credits) and advanced (20 credits) classes. After passing the exam of intermediate class on writing, reading, listening and speaking skills, the candidates at this level are awarded a certificate of intermediate level of English proficiency. The candidates who fail at this level are allowed to register in the PIASS department they have applied for with a retake of the module of intermediate English. However, they cannot be promoted to the second year of studies before getting the certificate of intermediate level of English proficiency.
- **Intermediate level:** The learners who get between 50-79% in placement test. They are immediately awarded a certificate of intermediate level of English proficiency and to register in PIASS department they applied for. However, they are required to attend the class of advanced English to get a certificate of Advanced English proficiency after passing exam related to this level. The candidates who fail at this level are allowed to register in the second year of their studies with a retake of the module of advanced English. However, no student can register in the third year of studies before getting the certificate of Advanced level of English proficiency.

- **Advanced level:** The learners who get between 80 -100% in placement test. They are exempted of both intermediate and advanced English classes since they are immediately awarded a certificate of advanced English proficiency.

#### **Article 4: Implementation agency of PIASS language policy**

This language policy shall be implemented by the PIASS Center for Languages and Bridging courses (CLAB).

#### **Article 5: The functioning of CLAB**

##### ***5.1 Coordination of CLAB***

The **CLAB** is chaired by a coordinator who is appointed by the PIASS academic senate and fulfill the following requirements:

- Holding at least a Master's degree in English, literature, and other related domains;
- 2 years of working experience in HLI and/or in other institutions of language literacy. The native English speakers are exempted of this requirement of working experience;
- Computer literacy and ability to use virtual platforms in teaching languages
- Competencies in teaching languages
- Editing and translation skills
- Fluency in both English and French is an added value.

##### ***5.2 Other employees of CLAB***

The PIASS academic senate appoints other fulltime and parttime employees of **CLAB**

when it is necessary. They have to fulfill the requirements described in the above paragraph. Apart from the academic staff of CLAB, the Senior Management Committee of PIASS shall appoint technical and supportive staff of the center when it is necessary.

### ***5.3 Key activities of CLAB***

- To organize a placement test to classify the learners according to their level of English proficiency at least one month before the beginning of the new Academic year or/and intake;
- To issue certificates of language proficiency according to the learners' levels (intermediate and advanced levels);
- To organize English teaching according the learners 'levels of language proficiency;
- To link advanced learners to international language centers to get international certificate of language proficiency,
- Teaching English and other languages (French, Kiswahili) to the surrounding community and foreigners (Kinyarwanda);
- Proofreading, editing, translation, printing, and other related services.
- To organize any other bridging course approved by PIASS academic senates and other competent organs.

### ***5.4 The cost of services offered by CLAB and other practical modalities***

- The cost of each of the services offered by **CLAB** is determined by the Senior Management committee of PIASS.
- Each bridging course is separately paid by its beneficiaries according to the rate

approved by competent organs of PIASS

- The center can only proofread, edit, and /or translate students' papers upon the presentation of a recommendation issued by the supervisor to prove the level of research progress.

### **Article 6: Final provisions**

This language policy comes into force on the date of its approval by the PIASS academic senate. All prior provisions contrary to this policy are repealed.

Approved By PIASS Council at Huye on 25-5-2022

**Chairman of PIASS Council**